

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

The specification has been amended to correct the typographical error pointed out by the Examiner at the top of page two of the Official Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the disclosure is respectfully requested.

Claim 9 has also been amended to address the objection set forth in the middle portion of page two of the Official Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to Claim 9 is respectfully requested.

With respect to the issue raised concerning the wording in lines 9 and 10 of Claim 1, the original claim wording, consistent with the written description, describes that the link is provided with axle portions each having a two faced portion and is also provided with a first engaging portion. Nevertheless, the Examiner's concern that the claim might be understood to define that each of the axle portions has both a two faced portion and a first engaging portion is noted. Thus, lines 9 and 10 of Claim 1 have been reworded without narrowing the claim scope to define that the link is provided with a first engaging portion and axle portions each having a two faced portion. Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim rejection based on the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

Appreciation is expressed to Examiner Rodgers for the indicated allowability of Claims 9-18 and the indication that Claims 2-5 and 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the subject matter of independent Claim 1 and any intervening claims.

The Official Action sets forth a rejection of Claims 1, 6 and 8 on the basis of the disclosure contained in U.S. Patent No. 6,401,302 to *Spitzley* in view of the disclosure contained in U.S. Patent No. 6,401,302 to *Josserand et al.* and U.S. Patent No. 6,167,779 to *Sano et al.* It is noted that a copy of form PTO-892 citing each of those documents was not included with the Official Action. In addition, copies of the cited documents were not provided. Nevertheless, upon obtaining copies of the cited patents, it was found that U.S. Patent No. 6,401,302 does not name *Spitzley* as the inventor. Indeed, U.S. Patent No. 6,401,302 names *Josserand et al.* as the inventive entity. Thus, the primary reference relied upon in the Official Action is not known. The undersigned phoned Examiner Rogers a while back regarding this matter in an attempt to clarify this point prior to filing a response, but the message left with Examiner Rogers was not returned. The Examiner is thus respectfully requested to reconsider this matter and, if necessary, issue a further communication providing clarification on this point.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

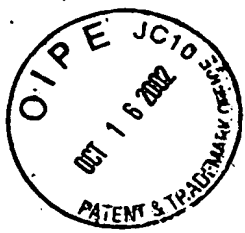
Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 16, 2002



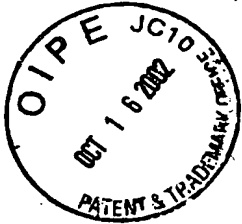
Application No. 09/855,701
Attorney's Docket No. 000400-837
Mark-up of Specification - Page 1

Attachment to Amendment dated October 16, 2002

Mark-up of Specification

Page 7, Paragraph [0022]

[0022] The link 14 includes first axially extending [axle] axle portions 14a, 14b each having two faced portions (i.e., portions that are two-faced or have two flat surfaces) 14a1, 14b1 as shown in FIGS. 6 and 7. The slots 12d, 12e in the frame 12 receive the first axle portions 14a, 14b of the link 14. The first axle portions 14a, 14b of the link 14 are adapted to be inserted into the slots 12d, 12e from inside when the two faced portions 14a1, 14b1 are aligned with the slots 12d, 12e.



Attachment to Amendment dated October 16, 2002

Mark-up of Claims 1 and 9

1. (Amended) A vehicle door handle device comprising:
 - a frame secured to an inside of an outer panel of a vehicle door and having a supporting portion and insertion holes;
 - a link rotatably mounted to the frame and urged by an urging force of an elastic member in one rotational direction;
 - a grip-type outer handle mounted from outside the outer panel and operatively associated with the link to operate the link so as to rotate against the urging force of the elastic member;
 - the link being provided with a first engaging portion and axle portions each having a two faced portion; [and a first engaging portion;]
 - the frame being provided with slots for inserting each of the two faced portions;
 - the frame being provided with supporting holes for rotatably supporting the axle portions; and
 - the frame being provided with a second engaging portion which engages the first engaging portion for holding the link in a preliminary holding position.

Attachment to Amendment dated October 16, 2002

Mark-up of Claims 1 and 9

9. (Amended) A vehicle door handle device comprising:

a frame secured to an inside of an outer panel of a vehicle door, the frame having insertion holes, the frame including a pair of slots, a pair of supporting holes, and an engaging portion;

a link rotatably mounted on the frame and having an engaging portion, the link including a pair of axle portions each having at least one flat surface, each axle portion being insertable into one of the slots in the [link] frame and rotatably supported by one of the supporting holes;

a spring connected to the link and applying a rotational urging force to the link in one rotational direction;

an outer handle having an insertion portion passing through the outer panel and into one of the insertion holes, the outer handle having an engaging portion passing through the outer panel and into another of the insertion holes, the insertion portion of the outer handle being in engagement with a portion of the link to rotate the link against the urging force of the elastic member upon operation of the outer handle;

the engaging portion of the frame engaging the engaging portion of the link to hold the link in a preliminary holding position.